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FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0204  
INFO RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 0002  
GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS 0001  
RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 000167

SIPDIS SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE  
SBU DELIBERATIVE PROCESS  
STATE PASS TO USTR (J.BUNTIN)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019-03-08

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [USTR](#) [WTO](#) [GCC](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: OMANI VIEWS ON GCC CUSTOMS UNION NOTIFICATION TO THE WTO

REF: a) STATE 19377

CLASSIFIED BY: L. Victor Hurtado, CDA, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Embassy - Muscat; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

11. (C) Pol-Econ Chief delivered reftel points March 8 to Saeed al-Riyami, Ministry of Commerce and Industry trade negotiator, and urged Oman to lobby for withdrawal of the GCC Enabling Clause notification. Al-Riyami replied that he understood U.S. concerns over the GCC's notification decision and acknowledged that Oman had made a commitment in its WTO accession package to comply with the notification requirements under GATT Article XXIV. He continued that Oman was not actively seeking a change in notification coverage and was amenable to the GCC Customs Union remaining under GATT Article XXIV for notification purposes. "Other states" in the GCC, however, were pushing for a switch to the Enabling Clause.

12. (SBU) Al-Riyami shared further that the GCC countries have been seeking a "compromise" with the Europeans in order to avoid direct confrontation at the WTO. He said that he planned to travel to Geneva later in the week to attend a meeting of GCC representatives on March 12 to discuss this subject internally (and perhaps with the U.S. and others) before the March 13 meeting of the WTO Committee on Trade and Development.  
HURTADO

To view the entire SMART message, go to URL [http://repository.state.sgov.gov/\\_layouts/OSS/SearchResults.aspx?k=messageid:17796ec6-cd83-43a1-8c](http://repository.state.sgov.gov/_layouts/OSS/SearchResults.aspx?k=messageid:17796ec6-cd83-43a1-8c)